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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE TO ALLEVIATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR IN CROATIA AND TO FACILITATE ITS RECOVERY

Letter dated 18 June 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit herewith a letter from the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, Mr. Nikica Valentic, addressed to you (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 104 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/48/50.

ANNEX

Letter dated 18 June 1993 from the Prime Minister of Croatia to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia I hereby wish to summarize our views on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/166 of 18 December 1993 entitled "International cooperation and assistance to alleviate the consequences of war in Croatia and to facilitate its recovery".

1. The Government of Croatia believes that a peaceful solution to the crisis in this area and the creation of conditions for reconstruction and development of the Croatian economy should be given top priority. That is why we have taken a number of actions designed to provide the conditions for systematic reconstruction and development of the Croatian economy. Thus the Government has reviewed reconstruction and development priorities and supported the International Conference "Reconstruction and Development of the Croatian Economy" held on 7 and 8 May 1993 at Zagreb.

2. The Government of Croatia wishes to direct your attention to the large-scale destruction inflicted on the Republic of Croatia during the war of aggression against it, as well as the significant human losses and suffering of the expelled and displaced population. With its GNP nearly halved by now in relation to the year 1990, combined with the forthcoming problems related to the restructuring of its economy, the Republic of Croatia is unable, without international help, to cope with the costs of displaced persons and refugees or those of renewal of its destroyed and damaged property. The Government of Croatia is aware of the fact that it will take years, even decades, to make up for the destruction inflicted on the nation's economy. However, the rebuilding of some basic assets ranks exceptionally high on Croatia's list of priorities, because without them the Croatian economy cannot wholly utilize even those industrial capacities which have been spared of destruction and thus mobilize primarily its own resources for reconstruction and development. Destruction and blockade of certain sections of the infrastructure have led to the economic fragmentation of Croatia and thus virtually paralysed economic activities in some of its areas. This particularly applies to the southern area of the Republic of Croatia, Dalmatia, where about one fifth of the Croatian population resides, as well as to some other occupied parts - hence Croatia's keen interest in a peaceful reintegration of its occupied areas in compliance with international agreements.

3. According to present estimates, in the few months of aggression waged by Serbia against the Republic of Croatia, more material damage has been done than during the Second World War, which was extremely brutal in this part of the world. About a third of Croatia's industrial facilities have been destroyed or heavily damaged. Infrastructure, housing and cultural treasures, including sacral buildings, have been very badly damaged. About 250,000 Croats have been expelled from the occupied areas of Croatia. In addition, Croatia currently cares for 270,000 refugees, mostly Muslims, from Bosnia and Herzegovina. So far, 590 places have been affected, of which 35 were razed to the ground and 34 were heavily damaged. These include major towns, such as Vukovar, Gospic, Osijek, Dubrovnik, Pakrac, Vinkovci, Sibenik, Zadar, etc. About 210,000 housing

units (approximately 12 per cent of the total housing fund of Croatia) have been destroyed or heavily damaged. Eleven thermo- and hydroelectric power plants and 40 transmission lines have been damaged. Of the primary and regional roads 6,500 km have been destroyed or damaged, while 47 bridges were wrecked and 35 damaged. Due to inflicted damage or occupation, about a third of the railway lines are out of use and 633 km of electric contact network, 18 railway bridges and 66 main railway station buildings have been laid waste. The telecommunication system is also heavily damaged. As a result of occupation, river navigation has been wholly suspended and river ports devastated. Major damage has been inflicted on the social welfare infrastructure. Thus 9 major hospitals have been destroyed, 59 heavily damaged and 492 schools damaged. The same fate has befallen 801 individual monuments of culture, out of which 510 are sacral buildings - 468 churches and 42 monasteries - and 350 historic sites and settlements. Cemeteries have been levelled and other traces of the Croatian presence in the occupied areas of Croatia wiped out. These enumerations do not cover all the destruction caused, let alone the losses in current income.

4. The Government of Croatia has prepared a survey of programmes for humanitarian aid, reconstruction and development covering the following areas: (1) humanitarian aid, (2) traffic and communications, (3) energy, (4) reconstruction of towns and villages, (5) economic revitalization of war-stricken areas, (6) major economic projects, (7) health care, (8) education, (9) cultural and natural heritage and (10) special priorities. We believe that the international assistance can be given through donations, granting favourable credit and joint ventures.

5. Given the gravity of the present economic problems of the Republic of Croatia, the prospects of help envisaged by the said General Assembly resolution can certainly forestall the deepening of the crisis in this area. We are convinced that the Member States of the United Nations had this objective in mind when they adopted the resolution. For this our special thanks are due to them. According to operative paragraph 2 of the resolution, the first step of the international community would consist in assessing the reconstruction and development needs in conjunction with the Government of Croatia. Therefore, I wish to inform Your Excellency that a satisfactory basis has been prepared for the commencement of the assessment and implementation procedure of international assistance. It would be highly appreciated if you could make a decision on setting up a United Nations mission of experts with the task of assessing the war damage and the reconstruction and development needs in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/166, as this would mark the beginning of its implementation.